

Art Unit: 3679

Ed

1. A network arrangement for a plurality of nodes each node being connected to one or more other nodes by corresponding node links,
 - the network being arranged into a recursive hierarchy of units having two or more levels,
 - the nodes being the units of the first level of the hierarchy,
 - the units of higher levels of the hierarchy being formed by groupings of the units of the previous level,
 - wherein the units of a level exchange a corresponding load status information.
2. An arrangement as claimed in claim 1 wherein, within, each group of units, a master entity is designated, the master entity conveying inter-unit load status information relating to the units of that level to the next higher level.
3. (Amended) An arrangement as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 wherein, in the first level, a selected node in each group is designated as the master node for the corresponding group,
 - the master node managing the transfer of node load status information within its corresponding group.

Best Available Copy

Art Unit: 3679

4. (Amended) An arrangement as claimed in claim 1 ~~or claim 2, or claim 3~~ wherein the load status information includes information on the available traffic capacity between the ports of each unit.

5. (Amended) An arrangement as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1 wherein each node includes node load status monitoring means to monitor the load status of the links connected to the node.

6. (Amended) An arrangement as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1 wherein at least one node of each second level group is connected to a node of at least one other second level group via a corresponding group link whereby group load status information can be interchange.

7. An arrangement as claimed in claim 6 wherein the units of the third level are formed by mutually interconnected second level units.

8 (Cancelled)

9 (Cancelled)